

ness, was respected, and he was God-fearing, a good Catholic, and already was happy in the affection of a young Catholic girl whom he hoped to make his wife.

Suddenly the girl changed. From being affectionate and responsive she grew cold and indifferent. No reason was given; and as days passed by, her fiance grew nearly distracted. He could make no impression on her now, and yet there was no seeming cause for the change. He tried and tried in vain to find the reason. He never found it: and seeing her efforts to close the breach were vain he grew moody and careless of business. He lost custom, and as he would give no excuse for the change his friends left him severely alone. Finally he sold out his business and left the town. His heart was broken. His spirit was gone. Life had no charm for him. He cared for neither relative nor friend. He had no use for the world, so he gave it no tolerance. He wandered from town to city, spending his money in disgraceful ways, drinking continually, until he lost sight of God and of all decency. He cursed his fate and wanted nothing so much as to die and end it all. Alas for the miserable soul that loosens his hold on his heavenly Father; how truly wretched is his lot. Besotted with drink, he was not a shadow of his former self, he was a foul thing that cumbered the earth. Perhaps some one was praying for him; perhaps his mother, in a distant land; but no prayer, or thought of God had entered his befuddled brain for many months. He was now in Oklahoma, and had reeled along the highway until he found a sleeping place where animals might rest, in a secluded fence corner.

Towards nightfall he awoke, and stretching himself he arose. He was sober now, and gave himself up to bitter despairing thoughts. What was the use of living? What good was he to the world? There couldn't be any God, for if there was He would have done something to him, or for him, long ago. He muttered curses, and walking on found himself at the entrance of a wood, where the moonlight lay upon the grass in fantastic shapes, where a little stream rippled along over the pebbles, where the grass lay soft and thick far into the silent hidden depths. He moved on, and at last sank